

PS
2479
.N65G6





1043

50.

This little booklet is a forerunner so to speak of a large volume to be put out sometime in the future. It may be had of the author, or of Rev. C. C. Mulburt, the blind singing Evangelist, Bangor, Wisconsin, at 10 cents per copy, post-paid.

ME 52 1283



Glimpses
Of
The Christ.

A COLLECTION OF
Original Poems.

By Rev. J. B. Hayes.

DONE ON THE PARSONAGE PRESS.
PALMYRA, WISCONSIN, 1899.
BY THE AUTHOR.

3. 4.
3. 4.



Primer
No. 156

41463

COPYRIGHT, 1899, BY REV. J. B. NOYES

TWO COPIES RECEIVED



SECOND COPY,

44616
July 10-99.

Glimpses Of The Christ.

The First Christmas Night.

Time's ever moving cycles
Four thousand years have told
Since first began the story
Of man in days of old:
Since, eastward there in Eden,
The man, with Eve, his wife,
Were sent to dress the garden
At God's command:
 Since life
By Infinite breath imparted
Made man a living soul.
(Though last of all creation
Yet greatest of the whole!)
Since Satan (vile deciever
All ages since the same!)
In form of creeping Serpent
Into the garden came:

Whence, all adown the ages
 E'en to the present time
 Prophetic finger pointed
 The eyes of earth.

My rhyme

Begins just where the focus
 Of all prophetic light
 Formed such a blaze of glory
 While shepherds watched by night;
 Begins just where the glimmer
 Of myriad stars o'erhead
 With sudden blaze of glory
 Revealed a lowly bed.
 (A bed? 'twas but a manger!
 So filthy, humble, small,
 Yet held the Infant Savior.
 My Lord, my life, my all!)

* * *

Upon the hillside, peaceful
 Beneath the evening skies,
 Yet full of life and bustle
 The little city lies:
 Her every house is teeming!
 Her Kahns are overflowed!
 All ages and conditions
 Have come by every road.

Some seek in vain for housings;
 Some camp beside the way;
 Some haste to end their journey
 Before the close of day;
 Some, weary, sad and lonely,
 From distant lands have come,
 And now 'mong many strangers
 They crave the joys of home;
 Yet others, bright and merry,
 With laughter fill the air,
 While others still are bending
 Beneath a load of care;
 Thus come the high and lowly,
 In numbers not a few
 From every land and country,
And every one a Jew!

* * *

What meaneth this commotion?
 And why do young and old
 Come flocking thus together
 Like sheep into a fold?
 Why come the gray haired father,
 The mother bent with age?
 Why come the rich with power
 And pomp and liveried page?
 Why come the poor and lowly?

Why come the sick and well
All for a time together
At Bethlehem's gates to dwell?

Ah! long and sad the story
Of Israel's downward way,
From all the pomp and glory
Of Solomon's proud day!
How, Moses' law forgotten,
God's name and power profaned,
His curse upon them fastened,
Their pomp and glory waned
Till, now no more a nation
Their necks beneath the yoke
Of slavery are bending!
Thus God his vengeance spoke!
How, all adown the ages
Had prophets true and brave
Foretold the great "Messiah"
Whose coming was to save;
Told how this "Prince of Glory"
At Bethlehem must be born
And then redeem his people,
Of all their glory shorn;
Of how, with tearful longing
The Jews now watch and wait

To see the consolation
Of Jewish Church and State.

God worketh many wonders!
E'en now he worketh one!
The world is set in motion
To let his word be done!
For lo, the Roman power
Would tax the exiled Jew.
So now for their enrolling
They gather, not a few;
Each to his native city
Has made his weary way,
So Bethlehem's streets are teeming
With faces strange, to day.

Behind the western hilltops
In all his glory glides
The God of day; The mountains,
Far up their hoary sides
From rock and crag reflected
Send back each golden ray;
Up, higher still, yet higher
The deep'ning shadows play
And push the golden circle
From crag to crag: Below,
The ev'ning twilight deepens;

The crowds press to and fro
Each to his own attending;
At last the topmost height
Yields up its crown of glory
And turns to greet the night.
Now, as the twilight shadows
Creep higher in the east,
Bright twinkling stars appearing
Wink down at man and beast.
All nature quiet, restful.
As though from morn till night
Well wearied with its labors,
Bids farewell to the light,
And wrapping well around her
A sable robe (though yet
With diamonds pure and sparkling,
And glowing rubies, set.)
Sinks now to sleep. When twilight
First gathered in the east,
And evening quiet settled
O'er nature, man and beast.
Some travellers, belated,
In groups of three or four
Draw near the little city
Their weary journey o'er.
The poorest of the people

Are these who now draw near;
 No horse, no camel even
 To bear them on;

But here
 And there a faithful burro,
 An ox, perchance a cow
 Doth bear the wife and children
 Of him who leads.

Just now
 The rich who needs must journey
 To Bethlehem, do lie
 On beds of ease;

Their horses
 Well bred and swift to fly
 O'er rocky road have carried
 Their masters long ago
 To where the best of quarters
 Awaited.

Even so
 The man whose wealth permitted
 A ride on camel's back
 Was long ago 'mong comforts
 Established;

Those who lack
 Must trudge along more slowly;
 Though footsore, hungry, tired,

Their faces stained by travel.
 In dusty clothes attired,
 Must plod, and plod, and, ending
 Their journey, they must take
 What wealth hath left (if any
 Indeed be left.

 'Twould make
 But little here, as ever
 The poor do find outside
 The quarters of the wealthy!)
 Thus ever side by side
 Stand poverty and plenty:
 Ineed 'tis ever so
 On earth;

 The poor may struggle.
 And, pushing to and fro
 Try e'er so hard to rise
 But fail, -- while yet the wealthy
 May, e'er an hour dies
 Be like the poor;

 And surely
 God meets the human need!
 Most men are poor, but Jesus
 The Christ was poor indeed!
 One man, (just when the sunlight
 Is fading overhead.)

Comes on with faltering footsteps
 While at his side is led
 His faithful beast.

The saddle
 Upholds his weary wife;
 The husband's form is manly,
 In fullest prime of life;
 His face, so warm, so tender,
 Reveals a pious mind;
 His manner tells the story
 Of nature true and kind.
 The wife is young;

Her beauty
 No pen could well portray;
 Beside the evening shadows
 Which hover c'er the way
 Her face is veiled save barely
 A pair of mild blue eyes
 'Neath brows of gold:

A whiteness
 A seeming pallor lies
 Upon the face;

The woman
 Seems wearied nigh to death,
 As, leaning toward her husband
 She asks with labored breath:

" Is't far to go my Joseph?
 I faint, unless we rest! "
 " Not far, my precious Mary:
 Just o'er yon hillock's crest:
 A curse upon Augustus! "
 He muttered, with a frown.
 " That we must make this journey
 To serve a Roman crown!
 Just now when ease and comfort
 Should be thy lot, my wife,
 This weariness and hunger
 Do but endanger life. "
 " Nay, murmur not, my Joseph!
 Dost thou forget the day
 When God foretold this hour?
 Would'st question, then, his way? "
 " Nay, nay, forgive me Mary!
 Our God shall surely lead,
 For see! within the hour
 Thou'lt have the rest you need. "
 While yet he speaks, the city
 Comes plainly into view.

Now past the well whose waters
 Their father David knew:
 Now in the street where Joseph

In boyhood's freedom roamed;
Now to the Kahn where many
In anger rave and foam!
"No room!" the keeper shouting,
"No room — move on, I say!"
Yet still the people clamor
And seek a place to stay.
On through this babel, Joseph
Crowds, to the keeper's side;
"Behold, my wife is fainting!
Have pity, sir!" he cried!
"One little room — a corner
For her! Oh let her stay!
See, friend, her sad condition
And let her rest, I pray."
"Fain would I heed thy pleading
And give a resting place
Where yonder suffering woman
Might hide her lovely face,
But not a corner even
Is free, else it were thine."
"'Tis well," said patient Joseph,
"Come wife, we'll not repine!"
He turns the faithful burro
To seek some other place
But hears the cry, "Hail, neighbor!"

A man with kindly face
 To Joseph's side is pushing:
 "Come, take for her the stall
 Where stands my faithful camel;
 I would this were not all
 That I could do.

Nay, bless thee!

No thanks, but haste thee now!"
 As quickly toward the stables
 He turns, with smile and bow.
 Ah! shame on human nature
 By multitude displayed!
 All honor, gallant stranger
 Who kindly offered aid!
 But ah, those humble quarters,
 To these a welcome prize,
 Form but a sorry shelter
 From curious, prying eyes:
 Oh think, ye modern mothers,
 Of all the grief and shame,
 Of what humiliation
 Attached to JESUS' name,
 For there 'mong burly drivers,
 Before another morn
 The Savior of his people
 In yonder stall was born:

There in a filthy manger,
 By humble shepherds sought,
 Lay one by whom salvation
 For men was dearly bought:
 Who said, " If thou would'st merit
 Salvation full and free,
 Go, do unto thy brother,
 And thou hast done for me."
 Beware, O man! Take warning!
 When selfishness you'd show.
 Beware -- perhaps 'tis Jesus
 You bid unkindly " Go! "
 Nay, succor those who sorrow;
 Give ease to those in pain;
 Take in the sick and weary
 And shield from wind and rain;
 Go soothe the broken hearted
 And light for them the gloom;
 Be sure that 'tis not Jesus,
 Before you say, " No room! "

As ev'ning shadows gather,
 And light to darkness yields.
 Full many flocks are feeding
 Out in the hillside fields,
 While near them, ever watchful.

To guard from beasts of prey
 Or bands of thieves and robbers.
 The faithful shepherds stay.
 Sometimes, if storm-clouds threaten
 Or Autumn winds are cold,
 The sheep and goats are gathered
 Into the sheltered fold;
 Sometimes the faithful shepherd
 Around him calls his flocks.
 The shining stars above him,
 No shelter save the rocks,
 There in the field together
 To spend the long night hours;
 Sometimes the shepherds gather
 In groups of threes, or fours,
 And keep by turns their vigil;
 'Tis thus to night they lie,
 One watching while the others
 Sleep, 'neath the midnight sky.

The shades of night have fallen.
 And, like a pall, o'er hill
 And vale they lie: All nature
 Seems sleeping, dark, and still:
 No sound to wake the echoes—
 No sight to greet the eye,

Save but the twinkle, twinkle
Of stars, in yonder sky.

'Tis near the hour of midnight;
A stillness as of death
Reigns o'er the land;
 The shepherds
Sleep, save the guard;
 No breath
Of air doth fan the hillsides;
The guard with sleepy eye
And dreamy mind sits gazing
Toward where the starlit sky
Bends down to kiss the mountain
Upon whose hoary side
Yon little city nestles;
Though bed and house denied,
No king or courtier, lying
On beds of down to night
More happy or contented
Than he;

 No grander sight
Than greets this shepherd's vision
Ere morning dawns again
Hath come to eye of mortal;
No message brought to men

Hath greater import: sitting
 Alone beneath the stars,
 No thought of pomp and glory
 His calm contentment mars.

As, near the hour of midnight
 He gazes thus afar,
 There streams across the heavens
 A light!

One glorious star
 Like meteor descending
 With flash of golden light
 Revealing hill and mountain
 And dimming stars of night
 Flies earthward:

Down, still downward
 Toward where the city lies,
 Her tired hosts unconcious
 Beneath the starlit skies!
 But never yet did meteor
 In such a manner fall.
 Nor flash before so brightly
 Its glory over all!
 And ne'er before did meteor
 Halt, in its downward flight,
 And, like a lamp suspended

Returns:

With voices low
E'en scarce above a whisper
They talk:

A softer glow
Seems o'er the landscape spreading!
Now high up overhead
A thing of wondrous beauty
Fills every heart with dread!
A seeming star comes floating
Down, down, with softened light
Tow'rd where the shepherds tremble
Their faces pale with fright!
And see! when near approaching
That which a star had seemed
Takes now a form!

An angel
Whose robes with whiteness gleam,
Whose face with all the glory
Of heavenly brightness glows
In mid-air pauses;

Listen!
Sweet music, soft and low
From out the depths of ether
Falls on the shepherds' ear!
'Tis little wonder surely

Their hearts are filled with fear;
That, on their faces bowing
The shepherds, trembling, dread
Because such mighty wonders
Appear from overhead!
'Twere strange if any mortal
Had courage now to face
That messenger of glory
Just from the heavenly place!
If eyes of earthly training
Could meet with brazen stare
The eyes of holy angels
From heavenly regions fair!
'Twere strange if pious shepherds
Whose school was nature's book,
Quailed not before that presence
Nor braved a single look!
'Twere strange if they, (forgetful
Of mortal's lower place.
How, lower than the angels
Did God create the race)
Feared not before this herald
Nor quaked to hear his voice,
Although in tones so tender
He bade their hearts rejoice.
"Fear not" the voice commanded,

" Behold, I surely bring
 To all the earth glad tidings:
 To day is born a king,
 A Savior of his people:
 I herald now his birth!
 Lo, peace, good will, rejoicing,
 Shall be to all the earth,
 For now in David's city
 In manger lying low,
 Is Christ the Lord, a Savior:
 This sign to thee I show."
 'Twere strange if such assurance
 Quelled not the shepherds' fear
 If to the welcome message
 They gave no heeding ear;
 Their forms no longer prostrate,
 Their happy hearts rejoice
 As, bowing low before him
 They heed th' assuring voice.
 Their eyes, already dazzled
 By heavenly sights so grand
 Are closed; a mighty stillness
 Is round on every hand.

The shepherds, nothing doubting,
 Their hearts in thankful praise

To God uplifted, kneeling
 See not the dazzling blaze
 Athwart the sky!

See only

In mind Messiah's face;
 See only Israel's blessing,
 Salvation for the race;
 See not the hosts of heaven
 Assembling in the air,
 Yet hear indeed the rustle
 Of glittering pinions fair
 As though 'twere but the sighing
 Of ev'ning breezes sweet;
 Ay, hear the hum of voices
 As in the air they meet.
 Then suddenly, like thunder
 In volume, yet as free
 And sweet and clear and thrilling
 As perfect harmony
 Burst forth the heavenly chorus
 Till heaven rang again.
 "To God in highest, glory!
 On earth good will to men!"
 Up spring the startled shepherds.
 And, gazing where on high
 The twinkling stars did glimmer

Above the midnight sky,
 They see, not stars, but angels!
 And where one star had shown
 A multitude of glories
 Whose number is unknown
 Join in the heavenly chorus
 And sing salvation's song.
 While untold reach of distance
 The mighty tones prolong!
 No pen could well describe it -
 That vision pure and bright;
 Those radiant heavenly beings
 With forms ethereal, white;
 The dazzling blaze of glory
 No eye hath seen before
 On earth;

Those faces, shining
 With Infinite love:

The shore
 Of God's eternal country
 Revealed to mortal men!
 What wonder that the shepherds
 Fell on their faces then?
 What wonder that a blindness
 Upon their eyes should fall?
 What wonder that a dimness

Their very minds should pall?
 That fainter, fainter, fainter
 Upon their ears the song
 Should grow, until in slumber
 They lie?

The heavenly throng
 Back through the pearly gateway
 On wings of light have flown
 To sing of joy and gladness
 Around th' Eternal Throne!

'Tis near the hour of morning;
 The guard lies fast asleep:
 Not one among the shepherds
 Now guards the helpless sheep.
 Yet neither wolf, nor lion,
 Nor robber dare molest,
 For soon will golden sunlight
 Guild every mountain crest.
 Here, there, about the valley
 Is heard the morning call
 Of bleating flocks;

But dimly
 The stars shine over all;
 Far in the east the halo
 Of dawning day is seen.

As, over hill and valley
It casts a silvery sheen.

What pleasant scenes in dreamland
Must yonder shepherd know—
For see! In sleep he's smiling,
His features all aglow!
Perhaps again the vision
Of heavenly faces bright.
And robes of dazzling brightness
Are marshalled in his sight!
Perhaps again the music
Of heavenly choirs he hears
While kindly angel voices
Would calm again his fears!
Perhaps again that brightness
Fills all the midnight skies.
For see,— he moves,— and shortly
Shades with his hand his eyes!
But no— 'tis but the sunlight
O'er eastern hills that flows
And, flashing 'neath his turban
Upon his features glows!

Awakened now, the shepherds
Each would to other tell

His pleasant dreams; what gladness,
 What glorious things befell
 At midnight hour; Amazement
 In every face is shown
 As in another's story
 Each shepherd hears his own.

'Tis strange indeed, that angels
 To each in dreamland came
 And told to each the story
 In words the very same!
 'For now in David's city
 In manger lying low
 Is Christ the Lord, a Savior,
 This sign to thee I show.'
 This sign! come brethren, follow!
 This sign! what meant he then?
 Perhaps in yonder city
 E'en now the hope of men
 Is born;

Perchance Messiah.
 The Prince of Peace, our King
 Is even now among us;
 'Twere not a stranger thing
 That God fulfil his promise
 In this, our day, than when

In Moses' day, or David's
 He shewed his power to men!
 That sign! come, let us prove it!
 "In manger lying low,"
 O God, be ours the blessing—
 Be ours the truth to know!"
 With one accord they hasten,
 (Save one, who guards the flocks)
 To where upon the hillside
 The city, 'mong the rocks
 Doth glisten in the sunlight.
 The wakened crowds they meet
 While jost'ling hither, thither.
 Fill every lane and street.
 "We seek the young Messiah—
 Can'st tell us where he's born?"
 Thus asked the eager shepherds
 Of all they met;

Forlorn
 Were they as oft repeated
 The scoff, or sneer, or frown
 Came back to them in answer.
 Thus wand'ring up and down
 Among the high and noble
 They search, but all in vain;
 Back to their flocks the shepherds

Would turn themselves again;
 "But wait!" quoth one, "in manger!
 In manger lying low
 Is Christ the Lord, a Savior,
This sign to thee I show!
 Why seek among the noble?
 Said not the angel thus?
 Come brethren, yonder stables
 May yet reveal to us
 The Savior of our people!"
 And now with one accord
 They seek more humble quarters
 To find the new-born Lord.
 At last they reach the stables
 Where, only yester-night
 Good Joseph and his Mary
 Had come.

Discouraged quite
 They would have passed, but Joseph
 Who from the well would bring
 Some water, met them:

"Neighbor,
 We seek the new-born king;
 Can'st tell us where to find him?"
 And kindly he replied:
 "No king of royal parents

New born, know I; Beside
 The infant lying yonder
 My wife doth call her son.
 (New born indeed since yester
 At time of setting sun!)
 I know no other:

Surely

No royal prince am I
 Who at a work-bench daily
 To earn my bread do ply!"

"True," quoth the shepherd, "little
 Appearest thou a king;
 But yet an angel told us,
 "Behold, I surely bring
 To all the earth glad tidings:
 In manger lying low
 Is Christ the Lord, a Savior:
 This sign to thee I show;
 So now we seek, O neighbor
 To prove the angel's word."
 To Joseph's mind there cometh
 The things so often heard.
 How, to the virgin, Mary,
 An angel long ago
 Foretold the little stranger

In yonder manger low.
 "And thou shalt call him JESUS,
 For he shall save from sin
 His people," quoth the angel;
 How every word had been
 In Mary's bosom treasured:
 Thought how the prophets old
 The birth of the Messiah
 In Bethlehem foretold;
 Thought how at midnight hour
 He saw (or did he dream?)
 Bright halos o'er the manger
 With softened brightness gleam;
 Was't mere imagination,
 That music which he heard
 High up in heaven's ether
 Like sweetest song of bird?
 All like a flash went passing
 Through Joseph's mind;
His head
 Seemed in a daze—all whirling
 As with a trembling tread
 He turned him toward the stables
 To lead for them the way,
 And said; "Come, thou shalt see him
 Though on a bed of hay."

They enter now the stable.
 A poorly lighted room.
 With but a narrow doorway
 To light the dismal gloom:
 Yet from one stall a radiance
 As from a lamp doth glow!
 They pause! "Tis strange," quoth
 "No lamp is here. I know! [Joseph.
 Perhaps a stone is missing
 From yonder wall, and so
 The noonday sun doth enter
 With such a softened glow."
 But no! now drawing nearer
 With turbans cast aside.
 They bow before the manger;
 Behold, on either side
 A radiant form, an angel
 Doth guard the lowly bed!
 A strange, ethereal glory
 About the mother's head
 Doth shine!

Within the manger
 Asleep, the infant lay.
 No mortal eye had ever
 Such sight beheld!

No face

Hath paled at grander vision;
 Nor yet a holier place
 Was known to men;

The shepherds

Whose eyes beheld the host
 Of angels, as in triumph
 They sang, did at the most
 Admire the heavenly singers;
 Did joy because the song
 Was sung on high;

But bowing

Not even to a throng
 Of messengers from glory
 That filled a midnight sky,
 But e'en before a manger
 In worship now they lie;
 Ay, worship, true and holy
 As none but Deity
 Recieves from man;


Hearts happy

And full with melody
 That wakes the purest echoes
 A human heart can know;
 And since that day this Jesus
 Hath e'er been worshipped so;

Not two or three, but millions
Can testify to day
Of blessedness, of glory
In hearts of all who pray;
Of all who, like the shepherds
Bow humbly at his feet
In love and adoration:
There in his presence sweet
Is joy, and peace, and pardon
No earthly power can give.—
Ay! strength of soul, more surely
In righteousness to live.
'Tis little wonder, surely,
Their hearts with love on fire.
The shepherds, humbly kneeling
Sang with the heavenly choir,
“To God in highest, glory!
On earth good will and peace;
Henceforth the heavenly kingdom
Shall evermore increase!”



Seeking The King.

 is evening in the desert;
Far o'er the waste of sand
The silvery moon is rising;
Its sheen, o'er sea and land,
O'er desert waste, o'er mountain,
O'er forest, hill and dale
Doth spread with softened glory
Like folds of silken veil;
Where, on the hoary mountain
Whose rugged sides, and steep,
(Where through the echoing gorges
The foaming waters leap,)
Are reared aloft, the moonlight
Dimmed oft by crag or dale,
When for away and misty

note. Some things in the general outline of this poem were suggested by reading Ben Hur.

Instead of silken veil
 Seems like the silvered tresses
 Which honored age do crown.

Those twinkling stars up yonder
 Which gaze so solemn down
 Like diamonds bright when Luna
 Doth hide her glowing face,
 Are now but pearls, so dimly
 They shine;

Fair Luna's face
 With unaccustomed glory
 Doth smile at earth;

Indeed
 'Twould seem, if Nature's quiet
 We like a book might read
 As ancients read the starlight
 As speaking good or ill
 To man;

If glorious moonlight
 O'er silent vale and hill
 Be token of the coming
 Of peace, good will to men,
 Then favored of Jehovah
 Is man.

Our story then
Begins just where this favor
In Bethlehem's Babe is shown,
While stars the gracious story
To watching sage make known.

Far in the silent desert
Where naught doth greet the eye
But dreary waste;

Where billows
Of drifting sand do lie
Like waves of raging ocean
While tempest o'er the deep
Like lashing tongues of fury
O'er foaming waters sweep.
By Gorgon's eye arrested
And turned to stone,— a tent,
Low, small and inconvenient,
Much soiled, with many a rent
In top and sides, is resting.
Upon the sand near by,
As though by travel weary,
Three resting camels lie.
Beside the door a blanket
Upon the sand is spread,
On which some food is waiting,
Light wine, dried meat, and bread.

From out the tent a murmur
Of voices soft and low
Betokens human presence;
Within, the softened glow
Of moon and stars scarce enters;
The eye can just discern
Three men devoutly kneeling,
While each doth pray in turn:
“ O God of our salvation;
O God of Abraham;
Creator thou, and Ruler;
The only true I AM;
Accept our thanks, O Father,
For all thy mercies great;
We joy that thou art stronger,
More powerful than fate,
And by thy holy prophets
Hast told of One to come,
A Prince of Peace, a Savior;
Thy word though scorned by some,
To us, thy servants, Father,
Is precious, more than gold;
And so in faith, O Father,
Like holy men of old
We look for thy salvation—
For did not glowing star

Reveal to us thy glory
 In eastern lands afar?
 And now, O Father, keep us;
 Be thou our guide; and when
 From Israel's land we journey
 Toward eastern homes again,
 Grant thou that we a message
 Of joy, and peace, and love
 May bear unto our people;
 Oh bless our eyes, and prove
 The truth of those thy prophets
 Who tell of Christ the king:
 Thy servants, O Jehovah,
 Into THAT PRESENCE bring!

Long weeks before, this trio.
 These "Magi", (so did men
 In eastern countries call them!)
 Set out to journey:

When.

As each in nightly vigils
 Sought 'mong the stars to find
 The fortunes of his people,
 And each with ready mind
 Beheld the sign Jehovah
 Had set, a gleaming star

No chart had yet recorded,
 And each, though sundered far
 By weary miles, in countries
 To pagan worship given.
 Read there the name "Messiah".
 Saw there the King of Heaven.
 Then each, led by the Spirit
 And guided by the star
 Set out to journey westward:
 No pleasant railway car
 To bear them swiftly onward:
 No Ocean Greyhound fine
 To bear them o'er the water:
 Yet neither did repine,
 But on his faithful camel
 Each made his weary way
 By night, in daytime sleeping.
 (No guide had they by day.)
 Until one morning, early,
 As each would camp and rest,
 Just here within the desert
 Each traveller spied the rest.

With common cheery greeting,
 Their tents pitched side by side,
 They rest them from their journey,

And for the day abide,
 Each learns that all are pushing
 From eastern lands to west
 The land of Israel seeking—
 The same uncommon quest;
 And so, when evening settles
 The dark'ning landscape o'er,
 They strike their tents, preparing
 To journey as before,
 Not one, but three together:
 Now surely time would pass
 More quickly.

Now the journey
 Would shorter seem:

Alas!

The evening far advancing
 Reveals no guiding star!
 No streaming light, no beacon
 To lead to lands afar.
 All night three watchers, eager,
 Scan every twinkling light,
 And wonder that their leader
 Doth not appear to night.
 "What meaneth it? For surely
 Before we met," quoth one,
 The star shewed forth his glory

Ere scarce the day was done!"
 But though till light of morning
 Appeared in eastern sky
 They watched, no star to guide them
 Did greet their eager eye,
 And they must needs unsaddle
 And feed the waiting beasts
 And rear their tents, while slowly
 The sun rose in the east.
 As evening shadows gather,
 Once more prepared to move.
 Hearts anxious, faces eager,
 They watch the sky above.
 But disappointed, weary
 When morning dawns at last.
 Their hearts now full of sorrow,
 Their mantles from them cast,
 They wonder much:

The scriptures
 Before them all the day.
 They search till early evening,
 Pause but to eat and pray.
 One tent is pitched, one only,
 The others cast aside,
 Their camels saddled, bridled
 And ready for the ride,

Their evening meal still waiting
 They kneel within the tent;
 'Tis thus at first we see them
 As, low their faces bent,
 They pray for light, for guidance.
 For, searching through the day,
 They note the olden promise.
 And how the scriptures say:
 "My word shall be established
 By mouth of witness three."
 "And now," they say, "henceforward
 We three as one shall be."
 Their ev'ning meal is waiting
 Beside the door;

They fast
 Until the guiding glory
 Upon their path is cast,
 Or till, no longer able
 To meet their solemn vow,
 They turn their steps to eastward;
 So here in prayer they bow,
 If yet perchance Jehovah
 Shall send the welcome light
 To guide them on their journey;
 If not, to-morrow night
 They watch—and next—but surely

Their faith did not decieve!
 Would God thus mock his children?
 Their trusting hearts believe
 It not.

 This day the knowledge
 That God would have them go
 And seek the new-born Savior
 Had come, while, bowing low
 They prayed; came like the whisper
 Of angels in each ear
 The welcome message, bidding
 To rise from doubt or fear;
 "Go thou, mine eye shall guide thee!
 Go, follow thou the star
 (E'en though the way be weary,)
 To western lands afar;
 Go, see the great salvation
 In Israel born this day;
 Go, seek this king of glory.
 The Prince of Peace;

 Thy way
 Lies where the star-like glory
 Which thou hast followed here
 Shall lead.

 So now at evening
 As they do first appear

To us,— knees humbly bended,
 They wait for God's good time
 To lead them on.

Now praying
 With heart-faith true, sublime;
 Now scanning yonder ether
 Where myriad stars appear.

Just now when first we meet them.
 Above the moonlight clear
 A strange yet piercing glory
 Streams through yon open rent
 And throws a heavenly glory
 O'er all within the tent.
 With cry of joy and gladness.
 Up,— out beneath the sky
 They leap!

The star, their leader
 Doth greet their eager eye!

Now, eager for the journey.
 Yet, thankfulness to prove
 They pause one little moment
 In prayer, then quickly move
 Their fast to break;

The camels

Well fed, are loaded;

Then

With parting prayer they journey
Toward where the hope of men
Awaits their coming;

Journey

O'er mountain, vale and plain.
But pause at early morning
To eat and rest again.
Thus nightly onward pressing
They move with eager haste.
Led by the starlike glory.
Sometimes mid desert waste
Where sea of sand, bleak, dreary,
Spreads out on every hand;
Sometimes 'mong fruitful vineyards
Or fields of fertile land;
Or else by rugged mountains
Hemmed in on every side.
Wher'er the shining leader
Directs their nightly ride.

At last, within the borders
Of Israel's broad domain.
Where once the Jewish people
With pomp and power did reign.

They pitch their tent.

What changes

The centuries have wrought!

Here once determined thousands

Well armed and fearing naught,

Would raze a mighty city

To earth;

Or, far away

The conquered host pursuing;

Their leader, Joshua;

God's mighty arm sustaining;

But now, alas! the power

Of Israel hath wasted!

It were an evil hour

When Israel's people wandered

Away from God's commands.

His wrath upon them resting,

Here, there, in foreign lands,

Her people now are scattered.

Beneath a Roman yoke

All Jewish necks are bending,

Hands weak, hearts well-nigh broke.

In all his radiant glory

The sun doth mount the sky.

As onward, ever upward
 The three their journey ply,
 Up toward the hoary city
 Jerusalem.

No star
 Hath guided since the border
 Was passed;

No light afar
 Across the sky to guide them
 By night did more appear,
 So now up to the city
 To Jewish heart so dear,
 Where, on Moriah's summit
 Far famed in many lands.
 With white and gold resplendent
 The Jewish temple stands,
 They make their way.

Each traveller
 They meet is made to stare
 Because of each, these strangers
 Do ask a question fair.
 "Where is the king of Jewry?
 Behold, we come afar,
 For in our eastern countries
 We saw his glowing star,
 And we are come to worship

The king of all the Jews;
Where is he born? "

And surely
No man could well refuse
To make a civil answer.
"No doubt their heads are turned,"
Thought many Jews;

Still others
The civil strangers spurned.
Still others smiled – though sadly.
At thought of Jewish king.
"Where born? ay, where? for surely
It were a fearful thing
If prophets told of Savior
Who never came;

If when
Times in their fulness sweeping
Bring naught from God to men
But deep despair;

No Savior
No Prince of Peace appear;
Oh where, and how? " Thus Israel,
Hearts sad, and filled with fear
Hoped on;

The weary strangers
From street to street inquired;

At city gates—in temple,
With earnest zeal inspired.

“What now? and why this insult?
Why thus with stave and sword
Well armed, with captain leading
Arrest us thus? One word
With thee, bold captain! Surely
’Twere best for thee to know
First what thou doest! Listen!
Unto thy monarch go
And say: In lands to eastward
Whence we have journeyed far
In search of Jewish ruler
And led by glowing star,
We too do wear the purple!
Go say to him Beware!
Consider what thou doest!”
Thus spake the eldest.

Where

In market place they rested,
A Captain of the guard,
(With soldiers in attendance,
Their hardened faces, marred
With scars, by visors hidden;)

Had roughly hailed the three.
 "Come thou," the captain ordered,
 "The king hath need of thee!
 Come thou with us to Herod!"
 'Twas then the elder spake
 In words before recorded;
 "I care not, though it break
 Thy hearts," replied the captain,
 "To me the king hath said:
 Bring here the three if willing
 To come; if not, each head
 Bring thou to me, and, gracing
 A pole, the multitude
 Shall see them rot.

Know thou, sir,

He meaneth to thee good
 If thou but come in quiet;
 If not—thy royal birth
 Shall save thee not; but Herod
 Would help—to end of earth
 Would seek the Jews' Messiah;
 Of thee would question then
 And help thy searching. "

Bowing

The eldest spake again:
 "'Tis well—lead on, and freely

Thy servants follow thee."

And thus away to Herod
Were led the Magi three!

About the palace, soldiers
Guard every entrance way
Well armed.— beside each gateway
Are watching night and day:
"Swordsguard—Salute!" each soldier
As passed the captain by
Did honor thus!

Through courtways

Arched in by naught but sky,
Through frescoed room, and passage
In semi-darkness veiled:
'Twere strange indeed if nothing
Of fear their hearts assailed:
In power of despot Herod!
Whose long polluted fame
Hath gone to lands to eastward,
Upon whose very name
A curse doth rest!

A tyrant

Well known in distant land.
Whose will is law;

Whose bidding
Each Lictor's heavy hand
Delights to do.

If scourging
For luckless prisoner's back
The king decrees, then surely
Of strength there is no lack!
Nor yet shall thought of pity
Make light a blow!

Nor yet
If still to further torture
The kingly mind be set
Shall lack of means prevent it;
Far down beneath that pile
Of mighty walls, are dungeons
Where humans starve the while,
Until, (unless, forgotten,
Their bones be left to rot
By fetters bound) their master,
Their pleadings heeding not
Shall call them forth to suffer
At stake—in heated chair—
Or heated tongs and pincers
Their quivering flesh shall tear;
Or beasts, half famished, angry
Shall pull to pieces quite;

Or yet, perchance while feasting
 The king desireth light,
 Well wrapped in oiled blankets,
 To pole tied fast—they burn!
 Strange if the three, well knowing,
 Thought not of these,— did spurn
 The very thought of anguish!
 As led the captain on.
 Each wise man prayed: “O Father,
 Protect us now!”

Anon

The Baths appear:

Here servants
 The three make quickly nude
 And plunge in gilded basins;
 No laugh or jest;

Not rude
 But kind, polite—each servant
 Well trained, did well his task;
 All grime of desert travel
 Is gone;

No man could ask
 For cleaner, whiter garments
 Than these they don instead
 Of those while journeying here
 They wore.

Once more the Captain
Leads on;

Ere long appear
The massive doors with hinges
Of gold, which ope the way
To Herod's council chamber.
Well might the strangers,— nay,
The soldiers e'en, come bowing
Full low before the throne
So humbly;

Surely never
Since Roman power was known
By conquered Jew, had Elders
Who wield Sanhedrim's power
Come thus to council chamber
Of Roman king!

This hour
Well might the sages tremble!
Beside the Roman Lords
On purple divan sitting,
Here men whose very words
As though divine are heeded.
Have gathered;

One and all
Who wield a priestly power
Have come at Herod's call.

Bowed low, the captain enters:
 Behind, the wise men three
 Make each his humble salaam:
 The captain, on one knee
 Said: "King. live thou forever!
 Behold, I bring the men!"
 "'Tis well! retire!" quoth Herod.
 His face is turned again,
 "So ho!" now to the Magi.
 "Art thou the men, who, seeking
 A Jewish king, are come
 'Mong subjects of a Cæsar?
 Why this insult to Rome?
 Speak thou, for well thou knowest
 Thy life the debt shall pay
 Unless thou answer truly."

A moment's pause to pray
 In secret to the Father,
 Then spake the three, and well
 The story of their journey
 Did they to Herod tell;
 How, in the eastern country
 The glowing star appeared:
 How prophets old had spoken
 And how the three had feared

Yet longed to see Messiah;
 How, following the star
 A long and weary journey
 They came from lands afar.
 The king with many questions
 Each one and all did ply.
 To know when first this brightness
 Appeared in western sky:
 Likewise of priest and elder
 Asked how, and where, and when
 The Christ would come, and, coming
 How do his work for men.
 Again outside the palace.
 The three would make their way
 To where the Jews' Messiah,
 The mighty Prince of Day
 Is born;

At gate of city
 They come—no time to waste.
 For had not kingly Herod
 Commanded them to haste?
 "Go find the king," quoth Herod.
 "And bring me word again
 That I may come and worship!"
 So once again these men
 Would journey on.

At evening

Behold, again the star
In southern sky appearing
Would lead them now afar
Toward Bethlehem!

Rejoicing

They follow on apace
With kingly presents laden
To seek Messiah's face.
Anon, the little city
Is found:

The shining star
O'er yonder kahn is casting
A radiant light!

Afar

O'er eastern hilltops, slowly
The morning light appears:
Within the gloomy stable
Where, in the coming years
Shall thousands fondly worship.
The three are bowing low
Before the manger.

Brightly,

Though yet with softened glow
Through all the place a halo

Of heavenly light is seen!
 Above her babe the mother,
 Her features calm, serene,
 Is bending;

Now the Magi
 Their store of presents bring,
 Such, too, as none dare offer
 To any save a king!
 And, like the humble shepherds
 They sing the story old,
 And lay before the infant
 Myrrh, Frankincense, and Gold.

Their duty done, with praises
 They turn again to go,
 But not to cruel Herod
 To take him word--ah no!
 As soon would either perish!
 But toward the east again
 They haste, to tell the story
 "Salvation free to men!"
 Since, all adown the ages,
 That King of Kings, adored
 By angels, shepherds, sages
 And nations as the Lord,
 Has subjects, many millions,

Who praise his holy name
Because to save, redeem them,
Jesus from heaven came.

Salvation.


Salvation! It is written
In the great Eternal Mind!
Written in the revelation
God has given to mankind!
It was written on the tablets
Which Shekinah hovered o'er;
Written by the holy prophets
By the Spirit's guiding power.
It was written in the starlight
When the Infant Christ was born
It was written in the glory
Of the first bright Easter morn!

It was written in the thunders
 And the gloom of Calvary's night,
 It was written in his blessing
 As he vanished from their sight.

It was written in the promise
 Of a Comforter with power;
 It was written in the harvest
 Of the pentecostal shower;
 It was written by his martyrs
 In their blood so freely shed,
 Written in the prayers of christians,
 Written in the wine and bread.

It was written in the promise
 "Follow me, I'll guide thee home,"
 Written in the invitation
 "Whosoever will, may come;"
 Written by the exiled prophet
 On a dreary Isle apart,
 Praise the Lord! for free salvation
 Written fully in my heart!

A Mother's Heart.

he time is early morning;
Far over vale and hill
The moon doth glimmer faintly;
The air is damp and chill;
Far in the dark blue ether
Like diamonds pure and white,
Bright twinkling stars do scatter
Their cold, unfeeling light;
Yet could they speak, their story
Must move the earth to tears!
Their eyes have seen the struggle
Of fallen man for years;
Nay, years? 'twere even ages
Since Noah's ark did rest
Beneath that same cold starlight

Upon the mountain's crest.
While mountain, hill and valley
Like charnel house, with dead
Were thickly strewn.

Above them

With glimmering ray o'erhead
Shone yonder stars, their beauty
Still watching o'er the place
Where God in coming ages
Would show his smiling face.
With those bright orbs up yonder
'Twas scarce but yesterday
Since God shewed forth his anger!
Anon, the break of day
Began at Bethlehem's manger
Where, from their place on high.
Those stars beheld the Savior,
The Infant Jesus lie;
Ay! from their midst with singing
Till heaven rang again,
"To God in highest, glory!
On earth good will to men!"
Came forth the hosts of heaven
To bear the news to earth,
While stars with light uncommon
Announced a Savior's birth.

And since that time those watchers
Full three and thirty years
Have seen the joy, the sorrow,
The labor and the tears
That mark a Savior's footsteps
Until his work was done,
And now, to-night, O Father,
Behold thy suffering son!
Just past the hour of midnight,
Near where the Kidron flows,
He knelt in yonder garden
And told to God his woes;
Still silent – still beholding.
Those stars in yonder sky,
Saw Judas and the rabble
Lead Jesus forth to die.

Within the grim, walled city
Full many thousands sleep,
While round the royal mansion
The guards their vigil keep.

Tall, gloomy, dark, forbidding.
Outlined against the sky,
The walls of Pilate's mansion
Beneath the starlight lie.

Upon the highest turret
Two guards with armor bright
And visors lying open
Gaze out into the night;
Out o'er the city, eastward,
Where, dimly outlined, lay
The hoary Mount of Olives,
Awaiting light of day.
Here, there, about the city
Some twinkling light is seen;
Save this, the whole is silent
Beneath the moonlight sheen.

While gazing thus, half dreaming
One guard falls fast asleep,
And presently the shadows
Fall o'er him, dark and deep,
And so his comrade, gazing
Out o'er the landscape wide
Saw not his form, nor either
That other by his side
Who, silently approaching
Spake not, but, standing by
Looked out above the city;
Now suddenly the sky
High up above Moriah

Reflected back the glow
 Of many waving torches;
 Up starts the guard!

Below

A noise of distant shouting
 And tramp of many feet
 Breaks out above the stillness
 Along the darkened street:
 The guard, now all attention
 Gives forth a startled cry
 As to the one beside him
 He turns with flashing eye!
 "What meaneth yonder turmoil?
 Those flashing lights? the jar?
 The swords, the staves, the shouting
 Like armies waging war?
 I fear some insurrection, for see!
 They come this way!
 Arouse the soldiers - hasten -
 Guard well the entrance way!
 Go thou and call the master—
 Set every foot astir!
 Ho, laggart!— Ha!— 'tis Pilate—
 Methought a soldier! Sir,
 Behold, like surging waters
 Yon multitude draw near!"

Then up above the turmoil
 A cry rang loud and clear:
 "On! On to Pilate's chamber!
 Lead on the accursed Jew!
 We have no king but Cæsar!
 Down with th' usurping crew!"
 "Some petty rebel, likely!
 Methinks 'tis not the hour
 To visit halls of justice!"
 Quoth Pilate.

But his power
 Self-conscious, vain, aggressive,
 Appeased his anger soon;
 His face as down he hurried
 Was like yon waning moon,
 In that no pity showed it.

O stars, close now thine eyes!
 Moon, hide thy face in horror!
 Thou sun, refuse to rise!
 E'en now that Savior, Jesus,
 Mid bond, and curse, and blow,
 And scoff, and kick, and buffet,
 Stands in the hall below!

As down the street came surging

That mass, with hue and cry,
With crash of staves and armor
While torches lit the sky,
The sleeping tired thousands
Awaken with a start
While prayers of fear or sorrow
Go up from many a heart.
At windows, faces eager,
Cheeks paling at the sight.
Eyes open wide and staring
Peer out into the night.
One female form stood bending
Far out with anxious gaze
To where, far down the streetway
The torches' lurid blaze
Revealed the crowd approaching;
As nearer still they drew
Her face, before but paling
Turned ashen its hue!
Her eyes, with one hand shaded
Bent on the prisoner's face
As, pushing, jostling, crowding,
They rushed him past the place;
She siezed the sill more tightly
As in her mind the truth
Dawned all too soon; Poor mother!

She recognized the youth!
“ ’Tis he!” she cried, “Oh Jesus!
My son! My son! God save!”
She clutched the air, and staggered.
And fell, cold as the grave!
A mother’s heart! Oh angels,
Wake not this sleeping one!
There let her sleep. Her loved one
Shall, with the morning sun
Be led to yonder mountain
With thieves and thugs to die;
Sure ’were a scene too awful
For loving mother’s eye!

When later on she wakened,
The dawn was breaking fast,
For while she lay thus, swooning,
Hour after hour had passed.
Her blue eyes opened softly
With puzzled look;

Her hand
Stroked back the golden tresses;
There round her bedside stand
Her friends, all weeping sorely;
“Oh John,” the mother cried,
As that beloved disciple

Among the rest she spied.
 "My boy—my Jesus! Tell me!
 Where is he, John?"

With frame
 That trembled — knees that tottered
 Close to her side he came:
 With quivering voice the story
 By ashen lips was said
 While on his manly bosom
 He held the mother's head;
 She listened, eager, trembling,
 While briefly he rehearsed
 The tale;

How, mocking, scoffing.
 The rabble raved and cursed;
 Of witness, purjured, lying,
 Whom Pilate ruled aside;
 How leading Jews contended
 With Pharasæic pride;
 Of how the cruel scourging
 The jeers, the thorny crown,
 Brought to his lips no murmur,
 And to his face no frown;
 Of how at last the people
 Prevailed;

How sentence cold

And cruel passed upon him
 While one Barabbas bold
 His freedom gained;

How Jesus,
 Before the morning sun
 Should rise half way to zenith
 Must die.

“Oh God! My son!”
 The mother cried, “Oh take me
 Where I may see his face!
 Come with me, brother, sister!
 Come, let us seek the place!”
 She started for the doorway
 But paused!

A murmur, low,
 But growing louder, louder,
 Came like a river's flow;
 Far down the street advancing
 A surging, rushing crowd
 Seeks now the city gateway
 With cries and cursings loud.
 Once more beside the window
 The mother stands!

Her eye
 With all a mother's anguish
 Scans every passer by!

They come from Pilate's mansion
 And seek Golgotha, grim,
 But 'mong them all the mother
 Has eyes for one, for HIM.
 "Oh, there! see, John! God help me!"
 There in the surging crowd,
 One bore a cross: 'Twas heavy,
 He staggered 'neath the load!
 "'Tis not thy son, O Mary!"
 Cried John, "He may not die!
 His power e'en yet may save him!
 He may escape and fly!
 But, wait—another, bending
 'Neath burden like the first;
 Oh, why such awful sentence?
 Such cruelty accursed?
 But see, 'tis not our Jesus,—
 Perhaps thy son——but no,
 Still yonder comes another
 With body bending low!
 Oh Mary! Stay not hither—
 Go hide thy mother eyes!
 Come—stay not by the window!"
 Up from the street the cries
 Came louder yet;

The mother
 Siezed fast the window sill,
 While from her heart of anguish
 A cry rang loud and shrill:
 "My son! O Jesus! Jesus!"
 Just now before the place
 The suffering one is passing;
 He raised a blood-stained face;
 Oh sinful man! Could angels
 But picture us that look
 When Jesus saw his mother!
 His body reeled and shook;
 His haggard face grew paler
 If paler it could be,
 While in the dusty roadway
 He sank upon one knee;
 One longing look;

A shudder
 Went through his weary frame;
 With bloodless lips he uttered
 Most tenderly a name—
 'Twas, "MOTHER!"

Holy angels,
 Record that name on high!
 Oh man, think thou of Jesus
 Led thus away to die

Before the eyes of mother!
Let pity draw the veil;
Not all the pain he suffered
Was caused by scourge and nail;
“On, Jew!” the captain shouted,
“Move on!” he tries to go,—
His strength is gone! he staggers,
Already bending low,
He sinks still lower,— lower,
Till in the dust he lies.
“Here, Simon, bear the burden!”
The angry captain cries!
“Up Jew—thou weakling— soldiers.
Support on either side!”
As to his feet he staggers,
And sways from side to side;
Quick to obey, two soldiers
Sieze each an arm, and so
Half fainting, pull him forward
With painful steps, and slow.
Thus on the grim procession
Toward Calvary moves again,
Where on the cross he suffered,
A sacrifice for men.

Out from the room rushed Mary:

Behind, with hurrying feet
The others came, to follow
Along the noisome street.
Half fainting, reeling, Mary
The mother staggered on,
While at her side supporting,
Came ever faithful John.
Full well he knew what horror
Must fill that mother heart,
'Twere vain to offer comfort,
But well he played his part.
"Perhaps thy son doth try us;
His power may yet return,
And, spite of bonds and soldiers
He Roman power may spurn."
"God grant it," prayed the mother;
Around her, closer still
The grieved disciples gathered
As nearer Calvery's hill
They came. There James and Peter,
Two Marys, Philip, Jude,
All those who followed Jesus
About the mother stood.
At last without the city
Beneath the blazing sun

They stand; E'en now the soldiers
Their fearful work have done;
There on the crest of Calvary
Three Roman crosses stand,
To each a quivering body
Fast nailed by foot and hand.
Why gaze on scene so awful?
Let pity draw the veil
And hide a mother's sorrow.
One scene shall end the tale;
The multitude, now scattered,
Withdrawn, save but a few
Made room for the disciples,
And nearer still they drew;
At once the suffering Jesus
Beheld the weeping crowd,
(His mother! His disciples
In anguish wailing loud!)
"Weep not for me, O daughters,
But weep for days to come!
Thou John, behold thy mother!
Woman, behold thy son!"
'Tis done! His work is ended!
Toward home they turn away
And with the "loved disciple"
Dwelt Mary from that day.

Three days and nights the sorrow
 Of death had settled round;
 No ray of hope or gladness
 The mother's heart had found;
 The Sabbath day is ended;
 The midnight hour is gone;
 The morning hours are passing;
 Far in the east the dawn
 Begins to break;

The mother,
 Her heart still strong and brave,
 With Mary Magdalene
 Seeks now the loved one's grave;
 Her mother heart is yearning
 For one long look,— the last
 For one last loving office;
 The day is breaking fast;
 The stars, now less like diamonds,
 Grow dim, and, one by one
 They yield to yonder brightness
 Which heralds morning sun;
 Now in the garden!

Dimly

The tomb's outline is shown!
 "But who," asks each of other,
 "Shall roll away the stone?"

Soon, after many windings
 Among the trees, they stand
 Before the tomb;

“ See, Mary! ”

The mother's trembling hand
 Points thro the morning twilight;

“ Behold the open door! ”

Down sank the mother, helpless,
 Her heart all sick and sore!

Poor nature struggles bravely,
 But, weak with grief and fear
 She fainted!

Father, pity!

A mother's heart lies here!

The sun o'er eastern hilltops
 Is peeping;

Overhead

The sky is bright and golden;
 Day breaks!

But still like dead

The mother lies;

A halo

Of glory fills the air!

Some awful, mighty presence
 Seems on the soul to bear!

Some influence o'er the woman
Seems working!

Now her eyes
Are open wide!

Some power
Seems helping her to rise!
But ah! Yon tomb is empty!
She stoops to peer within!
Two shining forms are sitting
Where Jesus' form had been!
She turns again, despairing,
Scarce knowing what to do!
'There in the path before her
Stands one, she knows not who!
She would have fled;

He asked her:
"Woman, why weapest thou?"
"Oh sir, yon tomb is empty —
Where have ye laid him now?"
Her face was veiled;

With weeping
Her eyes were dim and wet,
The voice which gave her answer
No mother could forget!
It was the voice of Jesus!
Her name in tender tone

He spoke:

Withdraw, Oh angels,
And leave them here alone!


A MOTHER'S HEART! Ah, think you
She suffered not?

That He
Who died felt not her sorrow?
Or could it ever be
Prophetic word more fully
Fulfilled in every part?
Well spake old Zacharias
"A sword shall pierce thy heart!"

But joy shall follow weeping,
Bright day the gloom of night;
Eternal joy shall follow
The weeping and the blight
Of earth; That Savior, Jesus,
Now risen from the grave
For you and I has suffered,
Your soul and mine to save!
Wilt have this full salvation?
Wilt have this savior true?
My faith I rest on Jesus!
How is it friend, with you?

The Shepherd's Vision.

An Easter Poem.

 he sun was slowly setting
In floods of golden light;
The day, so bright and balmy,
Fast merging into night;
From out the grim, walled city,
The hum of busy life,
The sound of merry singing,
The noise of wordy strife,
The tramp of many thousands,
The jostle, and the jar,
Proclaim that strangers, gathered
From hills and vales afar
To keep the great Passover,
(The Jews' unleavened feast.)
Are camped within her portals.

The shadows in the east
Are growing slowly darker;
Some shepherds with their sheep
Are coming from the pastures
The Sabbath Day to keep.
One, pausing on a hilltop
His weary sheep to rest,
Espied three Roman crosses
Set in the rocky crest.
The shepherd frowned. "O Israel!"
In bitterness he cried,
"How are the mighty fallen!
How humbled is thy pride!
Yon crosses, each an emblem
Of galling Roman power
Cry out in accents awful
Of God's avenging hour!
Return to God, O Israel!
Bow down in sackcloth, low!
God save us," prayed the shepherd.
With footsteps falt'ring, slow,
Drew near the shad'wy crosses
Their victims' names to learn,
And, peering through the twilight
He barely could discern

The names so dimly written;
The shepherd clenched his hands
As near the middle shadow
With flashing eye he stands!
"Tis false! 'tis false!" he shouted,
"The Jews no king have known!
'Tis cruel thus to mock us,
Who serve a Roman throne!
Oh come, thou great Messiah
Whom God hath promised long,
Redeem thy suffering people!
Thy name we'll praise in song;"
Then turned and hurried onward
Bemoaning Israel's fate.
Soon, passing near a garden
He paused before the gate.
A tomb is in the garden,
A crowd is near the door;
The burial rite is finished,
The ceremony o'er;
Now, turning sadly homeward
With solemn, faltering tread
The party near the portal;
One, marching at their head,
A man with tear-stained features
And priestly garments came.

And turned to greet the shepherd,
 Who gladly called his name;
 "All hail, good Rabbi Joseph!
 And who of all thy kin
 Hath met the grim destroyer
 And left this world of sin?"
 "Not one," the Rabbi answered,
 "No kin of mine have died;
 Our God in mercy grants me
 My kindred by my side:
 One greater far lies yonder
 Within my own new tomb:
 No bands of royal purple
 Dispel the sepulchral gloom;
 But yonder lies a prophet.
 A king of David's kin,
 A Son of God, O shepherd,
 Who came to save from sin;
 But few days gone, he entered
 In triumph yonder gate
 While thousands dance about him,
 The multitude was great!
 We thought, alas! that Jesus
 Our king henceforth should be.
 To day we did behold him
 Nailed to a Roman tree!"

“What say’st? dost mean it, Rabbi?
 A king—and crucified?
 Was that a true inscription
 On yonder cross?” he cried;
 Methought they did but mock us,
 But sayest thou ’tis true?
 Then curses upon Cæsar
 And all his murderous crew!”
 “Nay, nay, good shepherd, listen;
 The Jews have slain their king!
 This Jesus was the Savior
 Of whom the prophets sing;
 ’Twas our own Priests and Elders
 Condemned him——God forgive!
 While even Pilate prayed them
 To let the prophet live.
 And yet—but peace be with you!
 The Sabbath is at hand;
 God save thee from the sorrow
 That settles o’er our land!”
 “God speed thee!” quoth the shep-
 And slowly turned away [herd,
 To ponder well the wonders
 Of that eventful day.
 “A king! The Jews condemned him!
 How strange,” the shepherd thought

To solve the knotty problem
Full long he vainly sought.
(Not he alone has pondered,
But men of every land
Have wrestled with the problem
But failed to understand!)

Ere long, within the sheepfold
His flock he safely led,
Then lay his weary body
Upon his humble bed;
Anon, the king forgotten
The weary shepherd slept.
Last night the great Passover
Throughout the land was kept;
The Paschal Lamb was slaughtered
And eaten, as of yore;
Ay, sacred were the emblems
Those many tables bore!
Few knew that grim Golgotha
With crosses on her crest
To day had borne the emblem
Of Jew and Gentile blest.

The first day came, and early
The shepherd led away

His sheep to distant pastures;

'Twas just at break of day.
 When, passing near the garden
 Where, Friday eve before
 He met the Rabbi, Joseph,
 His heart again was sore;
 Around the tomb, (Oh curses!)
 Armed Roman soldiers lay,
 While back and forth before it
 The sentry paced his way.

Again the shepherd's anger
 Rose high. His clenched fist
 He shook in their direction
 As through his teeth he hissed:
 "The cowards! God avenge us!
 Is't not enough to kill
 Our king? And must they guard
 But all about was still. [him?"

(Ah, shepherd! Thou most favored
 Of all the human race;
 Bend low thy quaking body,
 And hide thy paling face!)

A moment paused the shepherd
To watch the hateful sight,
While darkness to the eastward
Was giving way to light.

Was that a flash of sunshine?
Ah no--'tis far too soon!
Beyond the eastern hilltops
The blazing god of noon
Remains, with all his glory!
Was't lightning? such a ray
Of light so bright, so dazzling.
Is not like that of day!
If lightning, where the thunder?
'Tis strange! The trees do glow
With softened light--and look!
The sentry bowing low
Before the tomb whose splendor
Now rivals morning sun!
The shepherd reels! he staggers!
He fears yet cannot run!
The earth is rocking, swaying!
The soldiers lie like dead,
While strains of heavenly music
Float down from overhead!
The shepherd, gathering courage,

And, shading well his eye
 Looks up. A scene of splendor
 Fills all the morning sky!
 A cloud of heavenly beings
 Are hovering overhead,
 While one, more bright and glorious
 The host of angels led!

Then suddenly he, halting
 His army o'er the place
 Where, round the tomb, the soldiers
 Lay, each upon his face,
 Winged then his way full earthward
 Swift as a meteor's flight;
 His robes were pearly whiteness.
 His face a dazzling sight!

His feet scarce touched the garden
 Ere nature seemed undone!
 Earth rocked and quaked and trem-
 As though the morning sun [bled;
 Did shine in all his glory,
 The landscape far and near
 With all the warmth and luster
 Of noonday brightness clear
 Shone forth! See now—in worship,

Before the tomb, bowed low
 The angel kneels. All nature
 Is hushed to silence now;
 From overhead a murmur!
 Ten thousand fervent prayers
 By angel lips are uttered!
 The shepherd unawares
 Upon his knees has fallen:
 A moment thus he waits:
 Then heaven sings with the chorus,
 "Lift up your heads ye gates!
 Behold, the King of Glory!"
 (The shepherd lifts his eyes:)
 "O tomb, ope wide thy portal!"
 Again rings through the skies!
 (The sealed door flies open!)
 "O death, where is thy sting?
 O grave, where is thy vict'ry?
 ALL HAIL, THOU MIGHTY KING!"

Prostrate the shepherd, swooning,
 Has fallen on his face!
 No human eye might see him,
 But God was in that place!

When once again the shepherd

Awakened from his sleep,
 Full many of his comrades
 Were passing with their sheep;
 The sun was shining brightly,
 Crowds pushed along the street,
 While in the trees birds caroled
 A morning chorus sweet:
 'Twas strange! The shepherd marvelled!

“ Why dreamt I thus? ” he said.
 “ Much time, so precious, wasted;
 Alas, our king is dead!
 In yonder tomb——” he started!
 The door was open wide!
 Within, all silent, empty—
 No sign of Him who died!

Long ages have passed onward
 Since that eventful day,
 When Christ the Lord and Savior
 In Joseph's garden lay:
 And yet we sing the story.
 We tell it o'er and o'er,
 How Christ the Lord is risen
 And lives forevermore;
 How we, on him believing
 May also rise and live;

How God through Christ the Savior
 Eternal life will give.
 I'm trusting in that Savior;
 By faith I claim the prize;
 Though death close all around me
 I hope like him to rise;
 I claim the Father's promise;
 I strive his will to do;
 I hope for life eternal
 Through Jesus Christ. Do you?

A Voice In The Wilderness.

Beside the rolling Jordan
 Whose muddy waters flow
 Where dreary plain and moun-
 No habitation know: [tain,
 Where hungry beasts do wander
 When driven from their lair
 In search of food; Where vultures
 Whose pinions fan the air
 By forest fragrance laden,
 Do seek their daily food;

Where roving bands of robbers
Who gain a livelihood
By cruel deeds, by thieving,
Ay, even murder, hide
From those who fain would punish;
No human here beside
Save now and then a hermit
Whose time to prayer is given,
Who, shunning human presence
Would nearer draw to heaven,
Doth safely dwell; (No robber
Is tempted to molest
Where neither gold nor silver
Are known; Where, at the best
A couch of leaves, a garment
From skin of camel made
Is all; Why need the hermit
Of robbers be afraid?)
E'en here, where sandy desert,
And shady forest glen,
And rocky gorge, and valley
Where seldom foot of men
Hath trod, are neighbors,
Begins our little rhyme;
Begins just where the prophet,
(The last ere Jesus' time,)

Saith, "Lo. I send Elias;
My way he shall prepare."
Begins where, near the river
A cave, (perhaps the lair
Of beasts of prey, or robbers,
In days long since agoe.)
Doth shelter now a hermit
Who, living thus alone
Far from the teeming cities
Whose filthiness and sin
Had prophets old, forgetting
The joys that might have been.
Dared to condemn; Communing
With God from day to day,
Sits now before the doorway
While evening shadows play
Beneath him in the valley.
A stalwart form, and strong;
Full six feet, straight and brawny.
With hair unkempt and long;
His shoulders, broad, well muscled,
Are bare; A robe of skin
About the lower body
Thrown carelessly; No pin
Or button hath the garment
But when for service used

A girdle holds securely,
But now for comfort loosed
Upon the floor is lying.
His long uncombed hair
And beard, untrimmed, all flowing
O'er skin once young and fair,
But now by storm and sunshine
Well tanned; Dark piercing eyes
Neath shaggy brows are restless:
Now flashing toward the skies,
Now sweeping o'er the valley.
Now bent upon the floor,
Now closed, while lips are moving
As though he did implore
Some unseen one. The features,
Though rough in detail seen
Are not unkind, but rather
Reveal a conscience clean,
A heart to evil stranger
But full of peace and love,
Well rounded out with knowledge
Of heavenly things above.
No letters hath this hermit;
No lore of learned sage;
No hand for cunning writing;
No ken of written page;

No school of priestly Rabbis
Hath taught fanatic's lore;
No biased thought of Moses
Or ages gone before:
No school but nature: Freedom
From each device of man
Led on by Satan's cunning
Hath been his lot; No ban
Of theologic scholars
Hath on his mind been cast;
The Holy Ghost his teacher;
No specter from the past
To haunt his every footstep
And make of life a curse;
No dream hath he of power,
Nor thought of well filled purse;
What wonder if his bosom
Is filled with peace; that deep
Within his soul the spirit
Of love and joy doth keep
A constant watch? What wonder
If thoughts that fill his mind
Are free from many evils
So common to mankind?
For since a lad, his dwelling
Hath in the desert been

Alone with God. Around him
Naught that would lead to sin;
Sometimes a traveller, weary,
Bewildered, wandered here,
And, sheltered by the hermit,
Had nothing more to fear;
Sometimes a band of robbers
Camp in the vale below,
Or caravan of merchants
In journeys to and fro
Would rest; not oft the hermit
Hears aught of what the race
Is doing; thus the Spirit
Of God held stronger place
Within his heart. This evening
Full stranger seems his mood
Than e'er before. While sitting,
His stalwart form half nude,
Low to himself he mutters
As though to others near
He spake the words: "He cometh!
My master doth appear!
Tomorrow doth my labor
For God, for Him, for truth,
Begin in earnest; Surely
The world will scorn his youth!

His face so like a woman's!
 His heart so pure within!
 O Lamb of God, come quickly,
 To save the world from sin!"

Down where the river floweth
 'Neath overhanging trees
 Whose branches wave and rustle
 With every passing breeze;
 There, close beside the river
 Are gathered full a score
 Of men whose weary journey
 Hath brought them to the shore
 Of Jordan's stream. Their manner,
 The bundles lying there,
 The camels, full three dozen
 That eat their humble fare
 Beside the camp, betoken
 A group of merchants bold
 From far off eastern country
 In search of Israel's gold.

The morning meal is eaten,
 And now the men but wait,
 (Impatient for the journey
 Before the hour is late,)

Until the camels finish
Their meal. The morning sun
O'er eastern hills is peeping;
Before the day is done,
Far on their weary journey
The merchants hope to be;
Full well they know that robbers,
In desert places—free
From hand of law, do wander.
A girdle at each waist
Doth hold a sword or dagger,
While near at hand is placed
A pointed spear. Right dearly
Would robber's spoil be bought
Unless in greater numbers
They with the merchants fought.
All through the long night hours
A watchful sentry stood
His guard; By faithful pacing—
Here, there about the wood,
Well knew if any danger
Did threaten; even now
On yonder rock which towers
Above the hilltop's brow,
With spear in hand he watches
For danger, lest a band

Of thieves, or robbers, wand'ring
 So often in the land
 Come on them unawares,
 And, dashing from the thicket
 Bear off their precious wares.

But see—each man upspringing
 With sword or spear in hand!
 Cheeks turning pale, eyes flashing,
 Like statues now they stand!
 Forth from the wood a sudden
 And startling sound had come!
 A voice, loud, clear and thrilling
 Above the noisy hum
 Of Jordan's rushing water:
 "Repent— O man, repent!"
 Now toward the shady woodland
 Each merchant's eye is bent;
 With swinging strides advancing
 Beneath the waving trees,
 His hair long, glossy, waving
 Before the morning breeze,
 Comes now a form, tall, stalwart,
 A robe of camel's hair
 Well girt about the middle.
 The merchants blankly stare!

What madman this? Forbidding
 At first appearance, yet
 A something in his presence
 No man could soon forget!
 Beneath a rough appearance
 A subtle power fine;
 A touch of truth; a savor
 Of holy love divine
 Impressed their hearts; The hermit
 (For lo, 'twas he!) again
 Sent forth the cry: "Repent ye!
 Repent, Oh sinful men!
 For lo, the heavenly kingdom
 Is even now at hand!
 From God the call proceedeth,
 Heed thou the Lord's command!
 Behold, one cometh after
 Much mightier than I,
 Whose shoes I am not worthy
 To loose; Yet even I
 Would preach to you repentance,
 And to that end baptize
 With water from the Jordan."
 Meanwhile in great surprise
 The merchants listen, wondering
 To hear such thrilling word.

To feel a subtle power
Their very souls which stirred,
As on and on the hermit
Talked; Words of burning truth
Flowed onward like a river;
Though barely past his youth,
Unlettered, yet some power,
Some influence divine
Did more impress the hearer
Than cultured language fine,
And ere he ceased his speaking,
Down on their knees, bowed low,
Prostrate the haughty merchants
Themselves in sorrow throw.
“What shall we do, O stranger?
Our sins we now confess!
How shall we seek remission?
How live for righteousness? ”
“I call but to repentance,
But one shall follow me,
One who shall bring remission,
Salvation full and free!
Go, give to men my warning,
‘THE KINGDOM IS AT HAND!’
Prepare before the Savior
A way in every land! ”

He ceased. The men, still prostrate,
Would seek still more to hear
As, bowing still, they question:
“When shall the Lord appear?
How shall we meet—how know him?”
No voice in answer came,—
The man was gone! The merchants,
Now risen, seek in vain.
At last they lade their camels
And hasten on their way.
Hearts full of deep repentance,
Not knowing how to pray.
To all they meet, the story
Of all their ears have heard
They tell. Of how the hermit
Whose power seemed not in word
Had told of coming Savior;
Of how his warning, sent
By them, “The heavenly kingdom
Is drawing near, —repent!”
Had thrilled their souls; In city
And country soon a fame
Went forth, how, in the desert
A preacher did proclaim
The coming of “Messiah” !
Of how salvation free

He brought to men. So shortly
 Much people came to see,
 And hear the proclamation.
 E'en from Jerusalem.
 From all about Judea
 As word was brought to them—
 Ay, from beyond the Jordan
 Came people great and small,
 Came priest and scribe and peasant,
 Came publicans, and all
 To hear this hermit preacher
 Who with such mighty power
 Did warn his generation
 Of God's oncoming hour;
 Who taught to men repentance
 Instead of sacrifice!
 That God would freely pardon!
 That now for sin no price
 Should be of men required!
 How, through his coming Son
 Would God bestow salvation
 By faith! And every one
 Who heard, believed, confessing
 Their sins; were all baptized
 With washing of repentance;
 How human heart hath prized

The reconciliation
 Which God through Christ the Lord
 Vouchsafeth to his people—
 Which often in the word
 To penitents is promised!
 Then to the river side
 Came men whose hearts were swell-
 With pharasaic pride; [ing,
 Scribes, Pharisees, confessing
 To multitude their need
 To be baptized! Repentance
 And pharasaic creed!
 With sneer of scorn the hermit
 Would send them from his face!
 "Oh wicked generation!
 Oh vipers of your race!
 And who indeed hath warned you
 To flee from wrath to come
 Whose hearts are filled with evil
 In quite unmeasured sum?
 Go bring forth fruits, ye vipers
 Which show repentance true!"
 But day by day came others
 In numbers not a few,
 All wondering at the hermit
 Whose eloquence so thrilled

The souls of many people;
Whose very words were filled
With some mysterious power,
As day by day he stood
Baptizing in the water.
Not many understood
The import of his teaching:
"For now the axe " said he.
"With unrelenting power
Is laid at root of tree;
Not e'en a mighty forest
Of righteous trees about
Shall save the one that faileth
To bear its perfect fruit.
Think not, Oh thou descendents
Of righteous Abraham
To flee from condemnation.
For God, the great I AM.
From stones beside the river
Could raise up holy seed:
Repent, unrighteous people!
Cast from you every ereed!
This mighty one who cometh
Will purge his floor complete,
And seporate most surely
The chaff from out the wheat."

Thus day by day he labored
And preached the kingdom near;
That soon among this people
A Savior would appear.
One day when many people,
A multitude, vast, great,
About the preacher hermit
Did early congregate,
And he with power was preaching.
Some face or form he spied,
And pointing with his finger
With ringing voice he cried:
"Behold the Lamb, the Savior
Of sinful human race!"
In vain the crowd endeavor
To single out the face.
In crowd, all pushing, swaying,
More strange indeed if one
Could keep but for a moment
A face in sight. The sun
Toward western hills is moving
As one with measured pace
Is through the crowd advancing:
Now, as he nears the place
The hermit, arms extended,
As though to ward away

Some danger, now is kneeling;
 "Come not, my master,— stay!
 For need of thy baptism
 Have I; and comest thou
 To me?" Thus spake the hermit;
 The answer sweet and low.
 In gentle tones, yet thrilling:
 "Nay, let it be so now,
 For thus it doth become us
 All to fulfil." With bow
 Of humble acquiescence
 The hermit, thus addressed,
 Baptized the comely stranger
 With water, like the rest.

As up from out the water
 The stranger came, a light
 All dazzling in its brightness
 Burst on the people's sight!
 Far overhead, the heavens
 Appeared as opened wide,
 While flashes as of lightning
 Came forth on every side!
 And now a form, descending
 As though the Holy Ghost
 In form of dove did challenge

The gaze of earthly host,
Comes floating down, still downward
Until upon the head
Of yonder dripping stranger
It rests! All quake with dread!
Now from the midst of heaven
A voice, though loud, yet sweet,
To ears of gathered thousands
Made evidence complete;
“Behold, this my beloved,
My Son! Well pleased am I!
Ye nations, hear his teaching!”
The voice of God Most High
Addressing mortal man! Prostrated
Are all the people now
Save Jesus and the Baptist!
A moment thus they bow;
The dazzling brightness fadeth
From evening sky; Below
A soft yet radiant glory
Round Jesus’ form doth glow!
Now, as again the people
Rise to their feet and stand,
Toward Jesus’ form the hermit
Points with his bony hand
And cries with voice loud, thrilling:

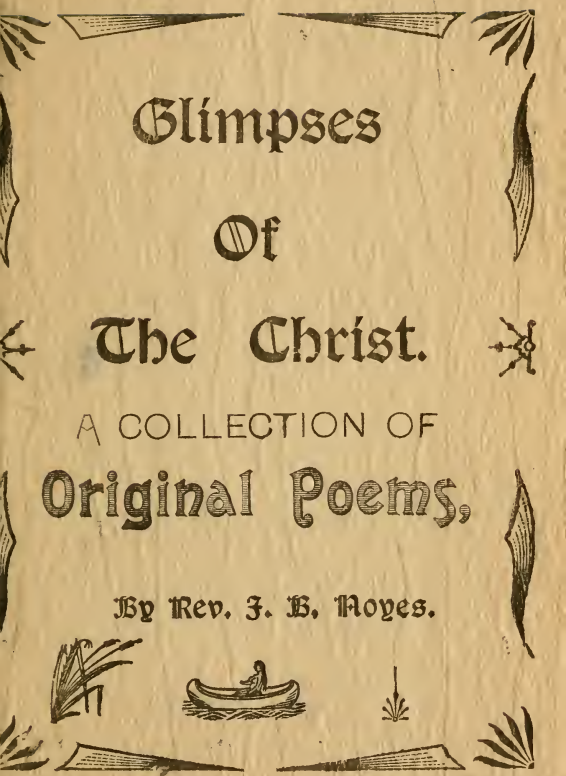
BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD!

And since have many millions
 In Jesus' footsteps trod,
 Because his life hath purchased
 Salvation free for us,—
 For all who seek believing:
 Have you sought Jesus thus?



CONTENTS.

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS NIGHT,	1
SEEKING THE KING,	33
SALVATION,	58
A MOTHER'S HEART.	60
THE SHEPHERD'S VISION.	79
A VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS.	90



Glimpses

Of

The Christ.

A COLLECTION OF

Original Poems,

By Rev. J. B. Hoyer.





LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 015 762 873 2